



SOUTHEAST NEWS

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From the Conference Minister

The Promise of the New

Advent, a season of preparation and birth, is a time to ponder the basic purposes and meaning of life: "When all else ... is said and done ... gone ... what is left?"

Words try to capture the ultimates of life in simple terms: Joy, Love, Hope, Trust, Caring and Courage. These are words that make all the difference!

How important any of these ultimates of life are is felt when we are without them. Their absence, lack or less, brings soulful pain.

Advent speaks a word of promise and fixes our eyes on a new life, a new day and a new birth of hope.

Hear these words freshly:

"Fear not ... I bring you news of great joy ... for all people."

What dramatic and contemporary words that bring us the news of a new life.

I pray to bless you all in this season of assured grace.

And personally, I thank you all, as individuals and churches, for our shared ministries in 1989, and for the hopeful and visionary new spirit for 1990.

The Conference is our place of God's calling us together to be a people of witness who can make a difference in growth and mission.

Merry Christmas, Y'all!

Roger D. Knight
Conference Minister

OCWM Not Keeping Pace with Budget

Churches in the Southeast Conference have not kept pace to date with the amount budgeted for Our Church's Wider Mission in 1989.

For the 1989 year, the Conference budget lists \$179,420.00 in OCWM support. At present, OCWM support is projected to reach only \$161,000, about the same as in 1988.

According to Lenda Sherrell, Conference Treasurer, total budget shortfall for 1989 is anticipated to be more than \$30,000 because the Conference has not received the anticipated growth funds listed in the 1989 budget as well as the anticipated OCWM support.

“It is important that churches re-examine their OCWM commitment for the year, or if they have not made their OCWM payment, to do so soon,” said Conference Minister Roger Knight.

UCC to Assist Conference

The Southeast Conference will get special financial aid and program assistance in church development, staffing, and stewardship in 1990.

The Executive Council of the United Church of Christ approved in late October the recommendations of the Southeast Conference consultation.

As a result, national church bodies will help the Conference in its effort to enhance its life and growth, in the following ways:

A one-time grant of \$8,400 for administrative support in 1990.

Funding for 5 years for a half-time person in church development.

More favorable funding formulas in sharing the cost of new churches with the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.

Sponsoring planning and training of leaders in church development.

A series of three Evangelism Institutes held for churches in the Conference over the next three years.

Assistance of the Stewardship Council in financial operations, and in the sponsoring and leading of leadership training events.

Assistance of the Stewardship Council in training and development of local church representatives in a “Mission Alive” program.

Conducting of a Feasibility Study for the development of a campaign to endow Conference needs and new church development.

Priority on three church sites when BHM begins its advanced site purchase program.

“The action of the Executive Council clearly gives the people and churches of the Conference the opportunity to build a stronger future as we work to strengthen in faith, flourish as we work to strengthen in faith, flourish as stewards, and grow in people and churches,” said Roger Knight, Conference Minister.

Notes from the Conference

Michael Small began as pastor of Belvidere (Tenn.) First United Church of Christ in October. He, his wife Sheila and daughter Micah are from Hackensack, Minnesota. *Steven Nyquist* has begun as an Associate Pastor at St. John's, Cullman, Alabama. *Joseph Hough* began as Dean of Vanderbilt School of Theology. He is formerly Dean of Claremont School of Theology in California.

Sick List:

James Myers, Birmingham; James Fields, Charleston; Fred Morris, LaGrange; William Green, Jemison, Alabama.

Upcoming Events in the Conference:

Jan. 16: Conference closes books on 1989 year. Please have OCWM and other receipts in before this date.

Jan. 19-20: Board of Directors Meeting.

Feb. 16-17: Pre-Retirement Seminar for Clergy and Spouses; Days Inn, LaGrange, GA. Sponsored by Pension Boards of UCC. Persons 50-65 are invited, but seminar open to all. Provides valuable opportunity to assess all needs and financing for retirement. Cost is \$65 for meals and lodging per couple. Registration deadline, February 1st.

Feb. 20-April 2: Telemision Video Van of UCBHM will be in Southeast Conference. Selected churches will take part in 5 days of planning, workshops and shooting to learn "how tos" of producing a church video. A Conference video also will be produced. Please submit requests to Conference office to participate by January 5.

March 29-31: Evangelism Institute, Atlanta. Start of a three-year series of institutes for pastors and at least two lay persons from each church. Reuben Sheares of UCBHM will be keynote speaker. Bob Kurtz, pastor of Nashville First United Church, is chair.

April 6-7: Board of Directors Meeting

June 8-10: Annual Meeting, Talladega College, Talladega, AL. Keynote speaker is Jeremiah Wright, pastor of Trinity United Church of Christ, Chicago.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased."

Luke 2:14

Christmas Greetings from the Conference Staff; Roger, Sandye, Kathy and Adrienne

Charity Begins at Home; Stewardship Begins in Joy

During this time of year, charitable organizations and worthy causes bombard us with requests for donations. And we give, sometimes resentfully and sparingly in this season of joy.

Charity is often an act of sadness. We have so little to spare when so much is needed.

Stewardship is an act of joy. We celebrate what God has given us, and give back in thanksgiving what we do not truly need for ourselves.

Stewardship is an act of faith. It is evidence of our trust in Christ's church to fulfill what God calls it to do.

In October, the Executive Council of the United Church of Christ affirmed its trust that the Southeast Conference has responded to God's call to it—to grow and to flourish in faith—by authorizing special assistance to the Conference. It is a joyful act of stewardship on the part of our national church bodies.

In this season of joy, take time to reflect on your gifts, and what work of faith you can perform for the Conference, especially as a steward, affirming your trust in our mutual life.

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This transcription was recorded on July 22, 2013 by Mike Stroud, director of Project 66-16, an initiative to record, compile and write the history of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ.

PROJECT

